

**Republic of Kazakhstan**

**FY 2002 QUARTERLY REPORT (3rd Quarter)  
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**Civic Education  
On-Site Technical Assistance**

**Submitted to the  
U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
by the International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES)**

**April 1, 2002 – June 30, 2002**

## **I. PROGRAMMATIC ACTIVITIES**

### **Civic Education**

#### ***IFES/Washington Briefing on Civic Education Efforts in Kazakhstan***

In April, IFES/Washington hosted a briefing on the current youth civic education programs conducted by IFES in Kazakhstan. The briefing was a part of IFES's *Series on Building Democracy*, which helps to expose IFES work to the wider Washington community. IFES Senior Advisor for Civil Society, Dr. Juliana Pilon, and former IFES/Kazakhstan Project Manager Bradley Austin spoke on the importance of civic education and democracy building programs in Kazakhstan. With introductory remarks by Vice President Paul DeGregorio, Europe & Eurasia Program Director Scott Lansell and Central Asia Republics Division Senior Program Officer Anthony Bowyer, the briefing focused on IFES' civic education history in Kazakhstan, its current projects and collaborative work of all three IFES Central Asia offices in the area of civic education.

Mr. Austin outlined various democracy-building and educational projects IFES/Kazakhstan conducts, including the Civic Education course and textbook (currently being piloted in more than 300 schools throughout Kazakhstan's 14 Oblasts), Student Action Committees, Student Local Government Day, Summer Democracy Camps and the annual nationwide Civic Education Tournaments (testing the civics knowledge of the top performing students from IFES' pilot schools nationwide). IFES' civics programs educate young Kazakhstanis and give them an opportunity to apply the lessons learned about democracy, politics and civil society, taught using role-playing and other hands-on interactive methodologies. IFES' Student Local Government Day program also makes it possible for the students to spend a day shadowing their local governments officials, learning the daily activities of the government and constituency interaction. The Student Action Committee programs include involvement with civil society institutions, participation in simulated elections, campaigns and other democracy-related activities. Experienced IFES students can start their own chapters of Student Action Committees to address local community concerns; to assist with these efforts IFES supplies them with necessary information materials, start-up kits, and offers its resource centers in Karaganda, Atyrau and Shymkent. The Democracy Summer Camps bring together up to 70 students at a given location to get a "feel" for what a democracy and civil society is all about, receiving lessons and working together on interactive projects for one week in a sequestered environment.

Following Mr. Austin's presentation, Ms. Kadisha Dairova, Councilor on Education from the Embassy of Kazakhstan, in the warmest and most enthusiastic terms thanked IFES for its civic education work in her country. Ms. Dairova indicated that the Embassy is well aware of the work IFES has been doing for the last several years, and offered support for continuation of the program. She mentioned that while in her present capacity as the Embassy's Education Councilor she has met many outstanding Kazakhstani students studying in the United States who are graduates of IFES' civic education programs. Speaking on the behalf of her government, Ms. Dairova expressed hope that IFES will continue its democracy-building work in Kazakhstan for the long term.

#### ***Student Local Government Day (SLGD) Project in Oskemen***

In April, IFES/Kazakhstan conducted its fourth Student Local Government Day (SLGD) in the eastern city of Oskemen. This was the first instance when the initiative to hold SLGD came from the local authorities; in March of 2002, Oskemen's Department of Education requested IFES to develop and conduct a SLGD project in their city. While the city Akimat was already working with the youth in a variety of projects under their program on social partnership, those projects were more in the form of lectures and brief excursions to Akimat offices and the local

administration wanted an event that is closer to the format of IFES' Student Local Government Days.

During the event, a total of 45 students from 18 local schools visited 20 government offices. Furthermore, the event encouraged women, in particular, to participate and as a result 28 female students and 13 women officials took part. The majority of participants were 10<sup>th</sup> grade students, with a few representing the 9<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grades. Students were selected based on their leadership abilities and academic excellence in the civic education program in their schools. During the Student Local Government Day (SLGD), these students closely interacted with local officials and learned about their duties and roles in government. Mr. Ertai Baibatchin, Deputy Akim, and Mr. Askar Nurgaziev, head of the Department for Internal Affairs of the city Akimat, briefed students on the structure of the city Akimat. During lunch, students also had an opportunity to informally interact with officials. To close the day, all the participants, students and officials, were divided into five groups and presented their opinions of the program, along with comments about their experiences and lessons learned from the event.

Since 14 of the participating 18 schools in and around Oskemen pilot the IFES civics course, most students and teachers were very familiar with IFES' civic education programming. The teachers had received their first SLGD training in November 2001, where they were also given IFES SLGD teacher manuals. During the second training in April 2002, IFES provided teachers with a detailed description of the SLGD, their roles in the project, local government contacts, and information about possible community problems for the teachers and their students to consider. IFES/Kazakhstan staff also prepared class assignments, lessons and exercises that were later used by teachers to better teach about local government.

Due to the preparations by IFES as well as the teachers and students, Oskemen's SLGD proved to be particularly successful. The event garnered both television and newspaper attention in the Kazakh and Russian media. All of the necessary information and materials were distributed in advance of the event and all of the participants were not only carefully selected, but also very well informed about the agenda and goals of the SLGD. Based on the feedback gathered at the end of the event, Student Local Government Day in Oskemen proved to be a meaningful and enriching experience, with students developing an interest in local government and forming new friendships and links between various schools around the city.

#### ***Further SLGD Partnerships Discussed***

A meeting with Mark Hannafin of International City/County Management Association (ICMA) was held in May to explore further collaboration between IFES and ICMA, particularly on the SLGD program. Following the meeting, 25 ICMA interns were briefed on the IFES SLGD and SAC programs. It is envisioned that these interns, who will be working with Maslikhat members throughout Kazakhstan during the summer, will promote an awareness of the SLGD activities to elicit further support for the project around the country.

#### ***SLGD Report Released***

In June IFES/Kazakhstan released a report on IFES' Student Local Government Day program activities for 2001-02 and made it available in English and Russian. The report, which is printed on heavy stock and configured for easy use and distribution, details the results of SLGD activities for the recently-completed school year. The report also provides details on how the SLGD events are planned and carried out, their value to students and local officials, and the type of media attention that can be obtained. Copies of the report are available in IFES' Washington D.C. and Almaty offices.

### ***Student Action Committee Project***

In May IFES/Kazakhstan Project Manager Ed Morgan and Senior Project Coordinator Marat Bigaliev conducted training for 19 Oskemen teachers on the Student Action Committee program. While initially teachers were guarded about the idea, the brainstorming and group discussions on local problems helped them to gain greater understanding and appreciation for the project. Teachers were able to see the value of volunteerism and creative problem-solving in addressing issues of local concern, such as youth crime and environmental protection. Participants had a lot of questions that were related to the teacher's role in the program, and how similar initiatives are conducted in the United States. The training went very well and both students and teachers alike were excited about the project. The training built upon previous IFES SAC trainings in Atyrau, Pavlodar, Almaty and elsewhere where SACs have been piloted. IFES has linked the conducting of SACs with its national network of civic education pilot schools.

Several other site visits were also conducted through the end of the quarter. The purpose of the visits was to gather information and see first-hand what these groups were doing, how successful they were in fulfilling their purpose, and whether they required any additional support from IFES. IFES emphasized the importance of recruiting new members among 9<sup>th</sup> grade students so that SACs can become self-perpetuating.

During a trip to Karaganda in May, IFES was able to conduct several site visits and meet leaders of its 2002 SACs. IFES Regional Coordinator in Karaganda Larisa Nochovnaya, who teaches the IFES-sponsored civics course in Gymnasium No. 38, shared the list of their respective SAC projects with IFES representative Almaz Bizhigitov and provided him with copies of their newsletters. Bizhigitov also had an opportunity to meet with several of the students themselves and discuss what kind of outreach efforts they conducted in the community. Bizhigitov learned that the local SACs in Karaganda, mirroring those throughout Kazakhstan, worked toward addressing social and community issues such as pensioner rights, the environment, and humanitarian relief concerns. Many other areas were targeted by the SACs, which reflects the diversity and high energy that the students put into the project. The SAC project was conducted largely during after-school hours. The level of effort exhibited by participating students was particularly gratifying to IFES and similarly rewarding to the students, not to mention useful to their respective communities. Though not required of the project, many of the students expressed the desire to continue working as volunteers to provide additional inertia to their previous efforts at community improvement.

### ***Follow-on Teacher Training***

In late May IFES conducted additional training for its SLGD and SAC projects through the auspices of one of IFES' partners, the Republican Teachers' Institute. Senior Project Coordinator Marat Bigaliev conducted training for 18 teachers drawn from every oblast of Kazakhstan. These teachers are responsible for extra-curricular activities, and, as they were interested in the SAC and Student Local Government Day (SLGD) programs of IFES, will serve as additional points of contact for these projects.

### ***IFES Visits Pilot Schools to Monitor Civics and Democracy Course***

IFES/Kazakhstan staff made a number of visits during the quarter to schools in Astana, Shymkent, and Karaganda to receive teachers' and students' feedback regarding the 2001-02 IFES civics course. While attending student lessons, IFES staff were impressed by the interactive nature of the instruction provided. IFES emphasized critical thinking for teachers during its teacher training sessions, and it was positive to see that training being put into action. In all cases there were uninhibited and spirited, yet orderly, discussions surrounding gender-related topics, and in the Kazakh School No. 65 of Shymkent IFES witnessed a simulated

election with class members serving as candidates for the Majilis and Maslikhat, media representatives, polling station committee members, observers, and voters.

During a visit in May to School No. 38 in Karaganda, IFES/Kazakhstan invited two guest speakers to participate in the discussion on gender issues: a representative of a women's civic group and Yulia Baranova, a student who provided the class with insights she gained while attending IFES Young Women's Leadership Conference in Kyrgyzstan. Baranova actively participates in various IFES programs and is the president of the Student Action Committee (SAC) in the School No. 97. IFES has encouraged students who have excelled in its programs and those who have participated previously to share their insight and experiences with younger peers. In this manner students can learn from peers and extract positive comparisons to their own efforts. IFES has worked with young student leaders, particularly girls, in a variety of projects designed to build confidence and endow students with the personal and professional skills to assume a greater degree of responsibility. Students have thrived when handed these opportunities, as seen in the quality of participants in the school-based civic education projects and Democracy Summer Camps.

### ***Civics Course Textbook Revision***

Midway through the quarter IFES completed its revisions of the Second Edition of its Civic Education Textbook, and fully translated them into Russian, and later, into Kazakh. The Teacher's Manual underwent a similar revision, with translations rendered as well into two languages. Following the preference of the Ministry of Education, IFES makes all of its materials available in multiple languages. Though Russian language materials are still used in most schools, the numbers of schools that provide instruction exclusively in the Kazakh language have increased steadily year by year. IFES has met this challenge by printing a greater quantity of supporting materials for the civics course in Kazakh.

During a meeting with the Head of the Department of Secondary Education of the Ministry of Education in Astana in June, Mr. Zhaunbay Karaev, IFES/Kazakhstan Project Manager Ed Morgan and Senior Project Coordinator Marat Bigaliev were assured that a review of the textbook and the manual would be completed in a timely manner, within a one-month period. Based on these assurances and the time estimates by the printing company, IFES was confident to have the textbook and accompanying materials ready in time for the beginning of the school year in September.

At the end of the quarter the revised IFES Civic Education Textbook and the new Teacher's Manual, both translated into Russian, were delivered to the Ministry of Education and Science in Astana and were undergoing review by the Ministry.

### ***IFES Advises Ministry of Education on Civics Course***

In June, in concert with the Center for Civic Education, Street Law in Kazakhstan, Academy of Education, and the Association of Young Leaders, IFES developed a concept paper on civic education. The document was prepared in response to a request from the Ministry of Education and Science to assist in formulating a civic education component in the Kazakhstan public school curriculum that would be applied nationwide.

The concept paper included many other points, such as: introducing civic education courses to the 1<sup>st</sup> through 11<sup>th</sup> grades; revising the state education program based on experience and advice of local and international NGOs working in the education sector; using the experiences of countries such as the U.S., Russia and European countries, where civic education courses are among the obligatory disciplines; options for financially supporting textbook publishing;

organizing extracurricular activities for students, and conducting competitions and Olympiads on regional and national levels.

It is anticipated that the concept paper will serve as a reference point for serious dialogue on the topic of national curriculum reform in Kazakhstan. IFES has encouraged the Ministry of Education to adopt national standards and a unified curriculum for civic education and other subjects in the school system. In its signed Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry, IFES agreed to provide advice and recommendations on curriculum sector reform, such as it is currently providing in the course of implementing its secondary school civics course and textbook project.

### ***Young Women's Leadership Conference***

From May 9-11, more than twenty young women representing four countries of Central Asia gathered at the Aurora Sanatorium at Issyk-Kul, Kyrgyzstan to discuss leadership and gender equality issues and explore how they could become more effective women's advocates in their societies. Five students from Kazakhstan participated in the conference, representing Taldy-Korgan, Karaganda, Pavlodar, Taraz, and Talgar. Two instructors also took part, in addition to the teacher-mentors accompanying the group. IFES Communications Coordinator Dina Hasenova led the delegation and served as an instructor for computer and internet training. Hasenova set up free Hotmail accounts to promote participants' correspondence and continued networking after the conference. Students received training through activities designed to promote understanding of gender equality issues, leadership, and a woman's role in a democratic society. The students also enhanced their communications and public-speaking skills through personal development modules. The event afforded the girls the opportunity to develop new friendships, enhance their leadership skills, improve their communications abilities, and strengthen their knowledge in and advocacy skills of gender equality.

### ***Democracy Summer Camps***

IFES/Kazakhstan conducted its first Summer Democracy Camp of 2002 from June 22-30 in the Tau Samal Sanatorium, Almaty Oblast. The camp engaged 72 students from four regions and the city of Almaty for 8 days to learn about forming Student Action Committees (SACs), analyzing what kinds of projects are needed in their school or community, raising funds to support those projects, and engendering good will for future projects. The Camp provided a relaxed atmosphere and gave high school students an opportunity to study about organizing into groups and offering self-initiated services to their schools and communities. Students sharpened their professional skills as well by gaining instruction in public speaking and effective communication strategies, which are key to successfully conducting outreach efforts.

It is expected that participants will put the lessons learned at the Camp into practice once the new school year begins. In an effort to follow up the Camp and measure results, IFES will conduct periodic evaluations of select schools and students in the Almaty region to assess their progress and participation in SAC community and school improvement projects. All students participating in the Summer Camp underwent pre- and post-event testing in order to measure progress achieved in knowledge and understanding of civil society and democracy. With an increased level of information and the practical experience to match, student-participants are better positioned to assume leadership roles in promoting other student activism and improvement projects in both their schools and communities.

The next Democracy Summer Camp will take place in Oskemen in August.

## **II. MATERIALS PRODUCED**

- IFES Civics and Democracy Textbook, Third Edition (Russian Language)
- IFES Civics and Democracy Textbook, Second Edition (Kazakh Language)
- 2001-02 Student Local Government Day Report.
- 2001-02 Student Civic Tournament Report
- Updated Student Action Committee Manual

### **III. ISSUES AND PROBLEMS**

IFES continued to work its way through the myriad of tax reporting obligations in Kazakhstan, which seem to change each day. Through consultation with other USAID partners, lawyers and other local advisors, the tax reporting requirement situation seemed to be resolved by the end of the quarter.

The Ministry of Education, which continues to support IFES programs through the Memorandum of Understanding it signed with IFES in 2001, has not always been available to meet with IFES representatives in Astana. IFES has looked to the Ministry for guidance and support for the textbook project and other school-based activities, as this support has been critical vis-à-vis interactions with individual school directors. It is hoped and expected that the Ministry will issue an expeditious acceptance of the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of the civics and democracy textbook during the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter, in order to allow for timely printing and distribution to participating schools by the opening of the 2002-03 school year in September.